

REMARKS

This amendment responds to the Office Action dated December 1, 2003. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and allow the pending claims based on the amendment and remarks presented herein.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 40, 49, 88, 97-98, 119, 132, 137, 141, 156, 176 and 194 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification as originally filed.

Regarding claim 1, the Examiner presented that the following recitation is not supported by the specification: “identifying the question with a discrete group of open questions for the expert to answer, at least one of the open question in the group being specifically designated to be routed to the expert by one of (a) one of the users and (b) one of the experts.” First, the adjective “open” preceding the term “question” has been redacted by amendment from this claim 1 as well as each claim in which it appears in order to more clearly recite the invention, despite the phrase “open questions” being supported in the specification as originally filed, see page 8, lines 18 to 21, i.e., “unanswered questions referred by another expert...”

Support for this amendment is found in the originally filed specification as follows:

(a) The description of Fig. 6A and Fig. 6A itself. First, Fig. 6A is described as the home page or Top Level which is presented to the expert (see page 8, lines 2-3). Then, Fig. 6A provides in the “Top Level” box the following text: “[p]age lists how many pending Q’s there are broken into categories for Q’s directed to Expert by name. Q’s asked to anybody. Q’s referred to Expert for initial answer and Q’s referred to Expert for supplementary answer.” Then, in the “Refer Question” box, the text is as follows: “[p]age has a list of other experts... to accompany referral. Expert may use this page without answering question... or answer question and use this page.”

(b) Page 1, line 22 to page 2, line 1 of the originally filed specification provides how experts “can refer questions to other experts.”

Applicants have amended the preamble to recite to route a plurality of questions to the expert." Each of the claims 132, 137 and 141 later recite questions being routed to an expert based on routing requests. Therefore, the Examiner's rejection is overcome.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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